

STATE EDUCATION FUNDING

MABE POSITIONS

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education, representing all local boards of education in Maryland:

- ✓ **Supports** increased funding for all students and targeted increases for prekindergarten, English learners, low-income students, and students receiving special education services.
- ✓ **Supports** sustaining full funding for public education in the FY 2019 State Budget, including the Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI), inflation factor, and hold harmless grants, to support the successful administration and operation of local school systems across the state.
- ✓ **Supports** legislative and funding recommendations consistent with updating and enhancing Maryland's nationally recognized standards-based school finance system.
- ✗ **Opposes** efforts to reduce state funding, shift funding responsibilities from the state to county governments, or condition funding on undue impositions on local board policy and budget discretion.

BACKGROUND

Local boards are charged with providing an excellent education for all students, including students who require additional services, and complying with myriad state and federal mandates. Maryland is deeply engaged in education funding reform through the Kirwan Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education. The adequacy study completed in 2016 recommends a nearly \$2 billion increase in state aid and nearly \$1 billion increase in local aid for public education. These increases represent the commitment Maryland must make to fully and equitably fund a high quality public education for all of Maryland's more than 870,000 students.

The Kirwan Commission is developing legislative recommendations to provide the resources necessary to provide local school systems, schools, and students with reasonable opportunities to achieve Maryland's high state standards. The Commission is aligning its funding and policy recommendations with the "Nine Building Blocks for a World-Class State Education System" developed by the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE). MABE continues to monitor and determine positions on specific funding and policy recommendations being considered by the Kirwan Commission.

The adequacy study finds that the base amount of per pupil funding should be significantly increased, with additional increases for prekindergarten students, students receiving special education, low-income students, and English Learners. The study recommends increased funding for a wide array of instructional and student support programs and services.

In 2002, the legislature acted on an adequacy study by passing the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act. This landmark law restructured the education financing system to enhance the adequacy, equity, flexibility and accountability of public school funding. Since 2008, state education funding has remained relatively flat. New unfunded mandates and cost shifts, such as teacher retirement costs, have negatively impacted school system and county government budgets. At the same time, Maryland has continued to raise academic standards in English/Language Arts, Science, Government, Algebra, Career Technology Education, and other subjects.

Maryland's Constitution places a high priority on public education by requiring the General Assembly to "establish a thorough and efficient system of free public schools" and to "provide by taxation or otherwise for their maintenance." Courts have interpreted this to mean funding must be sufficient to provide all students with "an adequate education measured by contemporary educational standards"; and if sufficient funding is not provided, the State is failing to meet its constitutional duty. MABE is confident that through incremental implementation of funding recommendations developed by the Kirwan Commission, Maryland can fulfill its constitutional mandate to fully fund and support an adequate, equitable, and excellent education for all students.

For additional information, see [MABE's Resolution on Adequate and Equitable Education Funding](#).